

BLUE GRASS BLADE

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DEVOTED TO THE PROPAGANDA OF FREEDOM OF THOUGHT

A T Parker
High And Abiding Heat Side
Spoon

BLISS OR BLISTERS.

(By Dr. J. B. Wilson.)

Oh! fer them good old preachin' days,
When preachin' it wnz preachin';
When Hell wnz handed out red-hot,
'Stid o' this modern teachin';
When sermons like a cyclone swept
The conscience! My! what twisters!
'An few they sed wuz sure o' bliss,
But most wnz sure o' blisters.

The people them days went to church
An' filled the Amen Corner;
When they back-slid they slid right back,
Thar warn't a single scowler;
An' all sat spell-bound when the whip
O' Hell wnz hissin' o'er 'em;
But since they've took the cracker off,
Somehow, the sermons bore 'em.

A sorrow fell when now an' 'en,
They sent us scholar preachers;
For they wuz tame,—what we liked most
Wuz 'em salvation screechers;
Who shoveled brimstone fast's they could,
An' served thar sermons steamin';
Thar warn't no fowl too fat fer 'em,
Nor bed too soft fer dreamin'.

Alas! Them good old days hev gone,
The fires no more they're pokin';
An' ef they mention Hell at all,
It's taken jes' ez jokin';
But my! how good I wuz them times,
When settin' 'tween my sisters,
They told how one in ten got bliss,
An' t'other nine got blisters.

Friendly Criticism About Government

Review of Judge Ladd's Recent Articles on this Subject, with Remarks upon Government, Its Rights, Powers and Duties.

(By Hulda L. Potter-Loomis.)

In the Blade of April 25, 1909, in the first of a series of articles to be devoted to setting forth "the proper functions and duties of government, wherein the rights of all are to be fairly considered," Judge Parish B. Ladd expresses sentiments which seem so inconsistent with each other and so widely at variance with the stated purpose of his article, that I am moved to take issue with him in a friendly way, and set forth the weak points in his arguments as they manifest themselves to me.

It is not necessary that one should have devoted a "long life to the study and practice of law," nor possess "wide knowledge of the numerous systems of government of the world," as Judge Ladd says he has done, in order to see that "the world is too much governed," nor to comprehend the fact that law and justice are not synonymous terms. As Macklin said, "The law is a sort of hoens-peens science, that smiles in yer face while it picks yer pocket; and the glorious uncertainty of it is of mair use to the profession than the justice of it."

The more ponderous the legal machinery of any government becomes, the greater and more widespread the disorder. The history of our own government proves this beyond argument. In this particular, I agree with the Judge, and also in his statement that "all legislation which has for its object moral ethics—forced morality—is mischievous." All such legislation has come from the meddlesome interference of ecclesiastics, and suffices to show us to what extent religious influences still dominate our legislative assemblies and that they are on the increase, in spite of the fact that the church is losing ground with the people directly.

This latter fact is without doubt the very reason why the church so assiduously seeks the enactment of laws having for their object "moral ethics—forced morality." It is the foundation of the new Inquisition which the ecclesiastics of the Roman Catholic Church intend to establish upon American soil, the "tribunal" for which is already set up at the seat of our national government, and which will become openly active within the next five years.

This is a digression, but being important in its relation to "moral legislation," will, I trust, be pardoned.

What Judge Ladd says as to the dishonesty of government officials is all too true, and in fact, none of his criticisms of our present Republican form of government in its application to and its effect upon the people, can be gainsaid. It is with his proposed remedies I take issue.

Judge Ladd says: "Before we can expect honest, efficient governmental officers, the entire fabric must be changed. Suffrage to the ignorant, the penal, the purchasable, should be denied; subject to this, the sexes should be placed on an equality. The true theory of government should form a curriculum in all our schools, at least in all above the lower grades. In this way the people, educated in the correct theory of government, would be in a position to judge of men and their fitness for office. At the end of the first generation, limit the elective franchise to this class; then the world might have, at least, one good government,

but never as long as ignorance, dishonesty and incompetency can use the ballot."

First, then, if "the entire fabric is to be changed," as the Judge suggests, who is to change it? Would not the matter have to be submitted to the whole people and would not "the rule of the majority" decide it? If not, why not?

If the matter is not to be decided by the ballot, is military usurpation to be the alternative? In that case, why disturb the present trend of our government? At the rate we are going in the direction of an aristocratic government of wealth, education and religion, shall we not arrive there in much less time than it would take to put Judge Ladd's program into effect?

Can there be any question as to the fact that wealth, education and religion are the three great systems in one, that imperil American traditions and institutions? Are not our great universities, colleges and schools dominated by financial and religious influences?

How then can educational qualifications, gained in such institutions, be expected to fit men and women for the faithful and righteous administration of government over the ignorant, the uneducated, and the unfortunate?

Is not the present educational system calculated to destroy individuality and all distinctive characteristics in our young men and women and mould or fashion them after one pattern, according to established authorities? Does not this system tend to destroy the will power also, and lessen the ability of students to exercise their reason and judgment and thus fit them more truly to become slaves under the rule of the despots who are seeking to build an Empire upon the ruins of our Republic?

How can a generation of men and women, whose minds are enslaved, be expected to form "a correct theory of government?"

What is "a correct theory of government?" Does not the history of governments prove that there is no such thing as a correct theory of government, by the fact that forms of government have been changed from time to time to meet the exigencies or demands of the governed? Do not the people and their governments evolve together? And is not the trend of evolution such as to make men fit for wider liberties, and is not the universal demand of the age for greater freedom?

Who, then, shall justly advocate the disfranchisement of any class of his fellow-men? Surely not a Freethinker, such as Judge Ladd claims to be. Where is the fine line of distinction which marks him as a Free thinker? who would restrain a man, however ignorant through the misfortune of birth and lack of educational advantages, from giving free American expression, to such extent as he was able, of his political or other views by means of the ballot, as well as by "free thought and free speech," when compared with a man who would restrain another by law from attending a ball game on Sunday, or put him in jail for blasphemy, or burn him at the stake for his denial of religious creeds?

Are not some of our so-called prominent Freethinkers, who are advocating the disfranchisement of certain classes of our citizens for one cause or another, in danger of using their influence to foster the old idea of "infallible authority," which logically would bring us to the acceptance of the doctrine of the "divine right of priests and kings?"

And is not this exactly what our aristocratic capitalists and church ecclesiastics are working for?

Has Judge Ladd been hypnotized by the Jesuits that he is thus advocating the steps which would help these, our enemies, to accomplish our destruction?

Let Freethinkers beware! The concentration of power in the hands of a future despot can only be accomplished in the United States by gradually taking the franchise from the people—first from one class and then from another,—until popular government will become only a memory.

How can Judge Ladd or any other person believe that under a government where the fundamental political right or privilege of its citizens, the ballot, was denied to any considerable portion of them, that any other rights would be fairly considered? Such a sentiment might reasonably be expected from the lips or pen of a political charlatan but never from any Freethinker worthy of the name.

The ignorant and uneducated would not menace American traditions and institutions, if the "educated and enlightened" capitalists and ecclesiastics did not connive together to control the votes of the former by persuasive methods, which are largely in the nature of threats of the loss of their jobs or consignment to punishment for eternity in Hell.

The ignorant voters would not sell their votes if there were no "educated" buyers, and there could be no better education for the ignorant foreign voter as to the value of his franchise than to be allowed to exercise it without the interference of capitalists and ecclesiastics, to whose interest it is that voters should be kept in ignorance.

All governments, from time immemorial, have been more or

less priestly or religious in character—the rulers being looked upon as demi-gods, who alone could interpret the will of the great unknown god or gods, as set forth in a 10-cent pamphlet entitled "Socialism or Religion—Which?" by Lucien Stehlins, of North Platte, Nebraska, and which I respectfully recommend to the consideration of Judge Ladd, as it shows conclusively that one needs more than "a life long study and practice of law and a knowledge of the various systems of government" to demonstrate the power of religious hypnotism, and to what extent it has been used to divert the attention of the people from their rulers while they robed and exploited them.

The same author has issued another 10-cent pamphlet entitled "Landlords and Lobsters—the Creators of Imperial Wealth and Religion," which I also commend to the Judge, as it outlines a system of government so far superior in every respect to his own, in that it contains no inconsistencies, and in my opinion is the only safe step for our people to take in order to meet present conditions and give any hope for future generations in the preservation of popular government.

In a later article I shall take up some other points in Judge Ladd's outline of "a correct theory of government", and show their weakness as it appears to me.

Meanwhile, I trust he will favor me with an answer to some of the questions herein propounded, for I believe he is honest in his desire to help the people out of the governmental swamp in which they are submerged, and this also is my own overwhelming desire.

Chicago, Ill.

MAN'S ORIGIN AND DESTINY

CHAPTER XIV.

THE REMEDY.—HOW THE WORLD PROGRESSES.—PARADISE ON EARTH.

(By Dr. A. Hansman.)

We are destined to die. There will hardly be a person found who denies this truism, and yet there are people who deny the cause and believe that every disease is curable. Conscientious and scientific physicians recognize the superior power of nature and acknowledge the truth, but the quack promises the impossible, the cure of the incurable; and while some idiots may believe him, sensible people will infer from the fact that people continue to die from certain diseases, that the great doctor is a humbug and that no remedy exists against death. It is the same with the social maladies of mankind; there are some that may be cured and others for which will never be discovered a remedy. And any one pretending to have found the arcanum that can be universally applied and will remove the ailments of society, is a quack, whose chimerical theories find believers because the impossibility of their application precludes the demonstration of their impotence and worthlessness. If we cannot remove the cause, we cannot remove the effect.

We found two main causes of poverty,—natural and individual. From the very nature of the first named, it becomes evident that they lie beyond human control; as long as life exists on earth will the elements continue hos-

tile to the work of human hands. The only relief for destitution arising from such causes is, and will be forever, sympathy. The same maxim holds good in cases of congenital defects and deformities; there is no other remedy.

There remain for consideration only the causes comprised within the second group, arising from errors and faults of human nature, amenable to correction and reform. These are individual faults, misproportion between population and natural resources, and matrimony.

Individual faults may be divided again into lack of application, laziness or incapacity, and misuse of money. There is no power to amend these individual shortcomings and obviate the inevitable consequences in the struggle of existence, as little as there is any power to prevent people from making bad use of their money. If they throw it away for luxuries, they cannot buy necessities; if they expend it for happiness after death, the church, they cannot derive any benefit from it on earth.

Regarding misproportion between physical force at disposition and the opportunities for its productive application we find that here also no power exists to regulate consumption and production within the complex system of division of labor, and nobody can be guaranteed the means of subsistence in any place where they naturally do not exist. Much less than for one person can the means of support be assured to a whole family in a given place.

Judging the actions of men from a natural point of view, we established a rational moral standard instead of assum-

ing them to please or offend an imaginary being. Remembering that a community is composed of single individuals, it follows that everything good or bad must be the result of man's good or bad actions or his errors. This latter is a very important condition, because as we know, the effect of a deed is independent of the intention.

As the result of the investigation of the social factors composing the social problem, we arrive at the important conclusion that there is but one way to solve it: "*Everybody must solve the social question for himself,*" because there is no other power to do it for him. The question is composed of just as many single parts as there are individuals in the world and for each one of them the solution of the problem of his own existence is his first and most important task. Considering that individual existence represents but a small fraction, numerically as well as chronologically, of species life, that we find society in a condition we are not responsible for, nor able to change without the co-operation of other members, it follows that we perform our duty if we act in a manner that serves our own interest best without infringing upon the right of our neighbor. In fact, that is all a person can do; he cannot help it when others make mistakes, although he may decline to take advantage of their ignorance. If this rule was followed by every one, the question would be solved, and the long dreamt of golden age arrive, as far as nature permits of such an ideal state of happiness. But to do our duty we must first know it, and here lies the difficulty, for nature has evidently built up society not on a moral, but on a mechanical basis, and it is man who attaches such significance to the manifestations of physical laws. Look at Europe: thousands of men, slaves of one person, ready to die for his ambition. Why, they don't know their place in nature. In a former chapter I related an anecdote of Frederick II and an old Jew, and, strange coincidence, found the same idea promulgated recently in the August copy of the Century Magazine, in a story entitled "The White Crown." Here the author assumes that through a wonderful, mysterious potency the benighted hordes of monarchial Europe are all at once imbued with the spirit of reason and humanity, and refuse to fight for their rulers. This is indeed the way in which social progress is accomplished, with the slight difference only that this change from a brute, who has nothing human but his shape, into a being which stands above the animal, takes place very slowly and gradually, that many generations pass away before any perceptible progress has been made in this direction.

It is told that the burghers of the ancient city of Nuremberg, in Germany, possessed a wonderful contrivance, a funnel, by means of which they were able to infuse sense into the cranial vicinity of fools. This is undoubtedly the most valuable invention ever made and lost by mankind; its re-discovery would start progress on a tremendous gait. To sum up the result of individual progress: The sum of personal intellect is expressed in the social and political institutions of a nation; the life of a single individual,

physical and moral, is the result of a preceding state and the cause of a future state of society.

Often when we take up a revolutionary paper, of the red variety, we find their demands based on wrong and unnatural premises, on a perverted conception of the laws of society. A proclamation usually starts out with some commonplace generalities; that god has created the earth for all and intended for his children to equally share his gifts, etc. What we know about the intentions of god and the creation of the earth has been discussed in a previous chapter and it is useless to waste any more words about it. Next, the rich are charged with having stolen or appropriated from the poor an undue share of the worldly goods, intended for all. This brief sentence contains two big lies. In the first place, god has not created the wealth; man has done it himself by the work of his hands and his brains. The countries inhabited by the richest nations produce almost nothing spontaneously for the support of men; where formerly a few thousand hunters and nomadic herders made a scant living, there are millions today enjoying a higher form of life. The second lie is that a few persons can wrench from the grasp of the people the wealth they covet so much themselves, unless it be their own fault. As little as a single ruler can dispose of thousands at his pleasure, if they are not moral cowards, held in submissiveness by their ignorance and stupidity, just as impossible is it that one single person can appropriate the fruit of the labor of thousands of millions, if they do not surrender it voluntarily. Social institutions which give one person the advantage over others, could not exist without the consent of the majority. The truth is that the rich have not robbed the poor (which would be impossible if they have nothing), but have acquired their fortunes by industry, giving an equivalent for all they possess, or by taking advantage of social conditions which the people in their ignorance have sanctioned by the law. Since all wealth has been created by the labor of man, it is absurd to maintain that a person coming into this world with nothing and starting out in search for an opportunity to apply his faculties, has contributed anything to the nation's wealth or has a claim to the value produced by others. But it is true that he will suffer indirectly, that the facilities for productive labor must be diminished when the land is owned and the channels of commerce be controlled by some one else. However, this cannot be avoided, for the simple reason that no two persons can stand in the same place. Thus, a person is compelled to seek a field for his labor himself, because there is no state, no person, who can play the role of Providence for him. And those, who from one cause or the other, have fallen to the rear in the race for the golden cup, would act more commendable if they fought the battle of life alone to the grave and did not perpetuate the curse of poverty upon the innocent children. They must remember that people are poor through the inscrutable laws of nature, their parents' or their own fault. However, people are more inclined to listen to the false teachings of religion,

because they are more in accordance with a desire to gratify their natural instincts and remove the moral responsibility. Though they may quiet their conscientious scruples, they cannot avert the inevitable mechanical consequences—want. Too late they find out that providence does not come to their assistance and that the Christian love which the frequenters of the churches profess to entertain for their brethren, is nothing but idle lie and humbug. In fact, the principle is wrong; charity cannot produce the means of subsistence for an unlimited number of people, and it must be the object of reform to make it entirely unnecessary. It shall not be denied that persons endowed with sympathy are found among the church members—as well as among

liberals, but the majority profess religion because it is far easier and cheaper to lay all the blame and responsibility for defective and unjust social institutions to an imaginary god, than to contribute one's own share to the reform of society. The poor people must always bear in mind that the rich owe their success not to the reliance on a supernatural providence, but to their own exertions under favorable circumstances. The more people learn to rely on themselves and not on powers that do not exist, the better they will be able to solve both parts of the social question, to do their duty towards themselves and towards society.

(To be continued.)

Why I Reject the Bible

Answer Given to Question Put by a Devout Believer in the Christian Fetich.

(By A. C. Naragon.)

My purpose in writing this letter is to set forth my views concerning the inspiration of the Bible and some reasons why I reject the Old and New Testaments as the word of God. This letter is especially dedicated to my good friend, William Luther Rice, and he is at liberty to allow any friend to read it, who may wish to do so.

The universe is a tremendous mystery, beyond the power of human intellect to fathom it. It is said, "In the beginning God CREATED the heavens and the earth." Scientific men are saying that the universe had no beginning; that it always existed; that it is unlimited; that it has no boundaries, and consequently no center or circumference. To MAKE a thing is to fashion it out of materials already at hand. To CREATE a thing is to produce it out of nothing; hence I do not believe in the story of Adam and Eve in the Garden of Eden. The human race existed thousands of years before Adam was made, about 6,000 years ago. In the museum at Harrisburg, Pa., are 3,000 tablets dug up from the ruins of the old city of Nippur in Asia, and the history of that country is written on those tablets, showing a dense population at the very time when Adam was supposed to appear on the scene. That alone is sufficient to shatter the whole Adam scheme, as well as the fall of man into sin. It is a fable and not a scientific fact. In order to patch up that mistake, theologians hatched up the scheme of the atonement, and Jesus Christ was brought forward and crucified on the cross to reinstate the human race

from their fall. Well, after all this had taken place, the human race was allowed to go ahead and multiply for 2,000 years, when all at once God repented that he had ever made man, and because they did not act as he thought they would, he proceeded to drown them all, except Noah and his family, for their wickedness. That flood continued on the earth for 150 days (five months.) God commanded Noah to build an ark, and to gather male and female of every living creature into the ark. Just how Noah caught all these animals and birds and insects and snakes is not revealed in the story. The text says that all the high hills on the earth were covered with water. This must have been so, for the ark rested on the top of Mt. Ararat, which is at least 2 3-4 miles high (measured by Humboldt.) The text says "the waters finally assuaged." Where did they assuage to? They did not evaporate and leave the earth, as the law of gravitation prevents anything from leaving the earth. How did the animals and birds survive after they were turned out of the ark? Everything on the face of the earth was swept away and destroyed. A theologian will tell you that God was in the miracle business at that time. It required a miracle to bring the water and another to take it away, and still another miracle to produce food for the living creatures when they were turned out on that bleak and barren mountain. All scientific men deny the operation of miracles; they know that the laws of nature, the law of gravitation, must be suspended before a miracle can be performed. That is the story that the church has held up for 1,000 years as being one of God's greatest performances. That story may be inspired, but it is not true; it never happened.

In the destruction of the city of Sodom and Gomorrah, when God rained fire and brimstone upon them and burned them up, we have a fine argument between Abraham and God. Abraham insisted that there were many good people in the cities and it would not be fair to kill all the good ones, in order to catch the bad ones. God fixed the number of good ones in the city at 50 persons, but upon investigation Abe could not find so many; so he talked the Lord into dropping to 40; but Abe could not find so many, and then down to 20, but they could not be found. So God finally said if you cannot find 10 good ones then I will let loose the brimstone. Abe could not find even ten, so destruction took place. Lot lived in that city. He was a brother to Moses. Abraham told Lot and his wife and his two daughters to take to the mountains and not dare look back; but Mrs. Lot was afflicted with the woman's curiosity, and when she turned to look back to see how the fireworks were progressing, she has was turned into a pillar of salt. (Read the 18th chapter of Genesis.)

Now, honor bright, what kind of a God would stop to tinkle with a man about some important thing he wanted to do? Sounds like boys' play. The people over in Asia had heard much said by the Jews about heaven and hell. (The Jewish hell meant the grave, hades; they knew nothing about the Christian hell, where souls are burned forever and forever.) So they decided to build a tower up to heaven, that they might learn something about the place without first dying to get there. The text says, that "all the people on the earth at that time spake the same language." Do you believe there ever was a time when all the people spoke the same language? It is not true now and was not then. God's anger was kindled about that time and he decided to put a stop to the building of the tower, and he confused their tongues, so that every man spoke a different language; and when the

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boss would issue an order not a man knew a durned word he said, and the boss did not know what they said to him. So they gave up the enterprise. The tower is known as the tower of Babel. And that is how the different languages and dialects—several hundreds of them—came about. Does that story appeal to your reason?

Old man Jonah was ordered by Jehovah to go over to Ninevah to preach. The old man did not want to go; it was a three-days' journey; 500 miles as the bird would fly. So he decided he would not go, but he started down towards the east coast of the Mediterranean Sea to take a boat ride, but on his way he became very sleepy and sat down by the roadside and fell into a deep sleep. When he waked next morning he found a great gourd plant had grown up during the night and it overshadowed him. A large worm attacked the plant immediately and the plant soon withered and died. Of course, God prepared the gourd and the worm to show the old man that he must not disobey the command of the Lord. Jonah got busy and went down to the little town of Joppa, where boats did their trading with the people in that section. The old man climbed aboard the first boat that cleared the port. Soon after the start, a great storm came up and the sailors becoming alarmed knew that some evil genius was on the boat; so they drew lots to decide who should be cast into the sea to quiet the storm; Jonah drew the unlucky card and was cast overboard. A great fish swallowed him, and he was in the maw of that fish for three days and three nights, when the fish cast him upon dry land. To get around the absurdity of this story, Dr. Talmadge said the man might have rested in the mouth of the fish and not been swallowed at all. If that were true, how did the man get air to breathe? Another miracle.

Elijah was a bald-headed prophet of the Lord. Forty-two children were playing round his home, and in their childish glee they pointed their fingers at him and called him "old baldhead;" and to avenge this prophet's dignity the Lord prepared two she-bears which attacked these children and tore them to pieces—all of them. Did God cause the children to stand still until each one's turn came to be torn to pieces? If he did not, then the story is absurd. The children would have scampered in every direction and the bears would have gotten but few of them. The story sounds more like the work of a brutal savage than the work of a loving God. Who can believe this absurd story to be true? Moses saw God on Mt. Sinai and talked with him face to face—saw God in a burning bush. What kind of a God would be nestling in a bush which

was on fire? It is not credible by an intelligent man.

Elisha was taken to heaven in a chariot of fire. Again the law of gravitation was suspended. Another miracle was performed.

Joshua commanded the sun to stand still for the space of four hours while he made war against the Philistines, and killed many hundreds of them. The machinery of the universe cannot be made to stop at the command of any man or any god.

The prophet Ezekiel met up with some wood-choppers, where a tree had been felled across a deep stream of water. While chopping off the limbs the axe flew off the handle and sunk to the bottom of the stream. Zeke took a little stick and struck the surface of the water, and the axe floated to the top so that the axe-man could get it. Iron being heavier than water, the axe could not float except by miracle. Do you believe that happened?

About four years ago, Dr. Cadman, pastor of the Metropolitan M. E. Church, of New York City, read a paper before a meeting of 400 preachers, with Bishop Andrews in the chair. In the course of his speech he said the time had come when the church must cease to hold up the old Bible stories as the inspired word of God, for the reason that those stories are unreasonable and unbelievable by intelligent men. He advised them to leave out of their preaching the fall of man in the garden of Eden, the story of the flood, the story of Lot's wife, the building of the tower of Babel, and the confusion of tongues, Jonah and the whale, etc.

In the foregoing discussion I have not touched the fiendish cruelties and savagery practiced against the people of Jehovah's armies, by direct command of God. It was the study of these things that caused me to reject the Christian religion as a divine institution. Bad as the Old Testament is, with its savagery, murders, incest, human slavery, the brutal, fiendish barbarities committed by the soldiers of God's armies, debauching the young girls whom they captured, throwing stones into their pure white breasts, dragging men under toothed harrows and countless other crime and most of these outrages done by the direct orders of Jehovah, it is still not as bad as the New Testament. For the God Jehovah I have no respect. With the millions of miles searched out by the powerful telescopes, no such creature has been found. If he is needed anywhere, he is needed here. He is described as having hands, a brain, feet, arms, eyes and mouth; he talked to Moses and to Satan in Job's case, and yet he is described as having neither body or parts. For this God I have no respect, neither do I believe that he is in the world. For the New Testa-

ment, I will say that I have no faith in its divinity. Nobody knows who wrote the manuscripts that compose the New Testament. Those manuscripts were not divided into verses or punctuated until the fifteen century. Jesus never wrote a line of the testament.

The reason why I say the New Testament is worse than the old is this: The old does not threaten us with everlasting punishment; the new promises to engulf every human being who does not believe and is not baptized, into a hell of fire and brimstone. I utterly despise that fiendish dogma and I defy it. It is a lie and was concocted by the priests to sear the people into the church and make them willing to give up their cash. There has been no crime too fiendish for the Christian to commit. The rack, the gibbet, the dungeon, the flaming torch, the murdering of thousands of women supposed to be witches—all these instruments of torture were invented by the pious and over-zealous Christian savages. The church would still kill the heretics if it dared to do it, but the infidels have called a halt on that gracious pastime. They no longer dare to kill people for their belief. There are but few intelligent people now who believe in the immaculate conception of Jesus Christ. If he existed at all, he was conceived and born of human father and mother. A belief in the supernatural is a superstition; everything that ever existed or happened was due to a natural cause. All the Gods that were ever set up were devised by the human brain, including Jehovah. All the devils and demons, ghosts and fairies, heavens and hells are the inventions of the human race. Science knows nothing of these things. Science is the only savior of mankind. Love and work, and the happiness derived therefrom are the chief end of mankind.

Canal Dover, O.

"SOUL SIGHT DEVELOPED."

(The Chaplain in a developing factory.)
I delved beneath the matter of this body
of this body here of mine,
And had my "soul developed" in a power
superfine;

So I see the hidden meaning of those who
ply their trade
On the great unthinking masses for the
money they have made.

I saw the sumptuous quarters and tapes-
tries galore,
And a sweet-faced little woman wearing
diamonds, near the door;
Then my "soul" was high developed in a
power there and then
As I saw the little spider waiting victims
in her den.

Abdul Hamid and God

Presumptions of Priestcraft

Will Thrust Themselves upon Public Gatherings in an Effort to Foster Ancient Fables upon a Passive Multitude.

(By Warren S. Dean.)

Some time ago we noted the birthday observances of some of the most honored citizens of the American nation, and perhaps now it will not be out of place to record some of the impressions that we have gained from them.

In regard to observances of Lincoln's birthday, the occasion called the writer with many others to hear and see how in keeping with those principles he held most dear through life. Arriving at the Opera House before many had gathered, we were gratified to see how appropriate the decorations had been arranged for the occasion. From wires string across the room were suspended a number of hearts of different sizes in the tints of our national colors; not the symbols of slavish minds, but something that impresses us with the feeling that there are many, kindly, honest natures in this world willing to stand for the unselfish endeavor of those who are trying to make better conditions for all in this life. And as we noted the remnant of those who went forth at the call of their beloved President to do their part in battle so that we might have a nation free from the curse of chattel slavery, we thought of the few short years in which their own life work would be done, and soon to follow their comrades to their long rest.

But we soon discovered some of the discords that usually work their way into such gatherings that loving hearts have called together for the purpose of cementing the love we have for those who gave their lives up to free their fellow-beings from bondage.

In the invocation of the Reverend gentleman, he ended his supplications with the Lord's prayer. As we listened and noted some of his slavish, meaningless phrases, we also noted those words that by past and present events had a far-reaching meaning to them. That part which says, "Give us this day our daily bread," (interpreted in the light of the lives and acts of the priesthood) means give us a comfortable living for nothing in return.

And "Forgive our trespasses as we forgive those who trespass against us," reads thus: Our trespass against others is

done for the Lord's sake, and those who doubt or transgress our divine (?) beliefs their conditions will be made so disagreeable for them that they will have no wish to trespass against us.

There was much that reminded us of the kindly, loving, unselfish acts of our martyred President at that meeting, but the purposes of the priesthood were plainly to be seen, with the blind or willing endorsement of the general public. With sober reflection, we now note the numerous efforts of the advocates of mental slavery to get into the limelight on nearly every occasion where the people come together for the purpose of keeping green the memory of those who have done so much to abolish slavery—dragging in their ancient ignorance and falsehoods, whose teachings in the past and present time, coupled with human selfishness, is the greatest curse to truth, freedom and progress of the human race.

The timely and able article of Judge Parish B. Ladd in the Blade of Feb. 21, should be noted by all lovers of mental liberty; in part of which he says:

"Should these conspirators succeed, we shall have church and state united; the church to dictate the laws and the obedient state to enforce them, as in the dark ages. This nefarious band of conspirators boasts that it has already brought within its fold all of the quasi-religious organizations, and it is now at work to capture the labor unions. No man who prizes personal liberty, and knows for what it stands, should allow himself to underestimate the strength and desperate character of this band of plunderers,—this so-called National Reform Association. Better that all go down in a struggle than to submit to slavery at the hands of this religious fanaticism."

Judge Ladd is one of the few men who fully realizes the power and purpose of the hypocritical schemers, whose power and wealth have not been derived from the following of useful work and those things that call for truth and honest uprightness between man and man, but by the teachings of delusions and falsehoods of ancient ignorance, whose advocates have in the past imposed their brutal conduct upon helpless people, with the ignorant, passive cowardice of the masses, whose highest thoughts seem solely to be the pursuit of the Almighty Dollar.

Delhi, N. Y.

(By Harold Banning.)

When we compare the criminal records of Abdul Hamid, the late Sultan of Turkey, and God Almighty, supposed ruler of the universe, we must instantly arrive at the conclusion that Abdul is the better man. Such a comparison presents many difficulties, as we are not well supplied with authentic material in either case.

Abdul Hamid ascended the throne of Turkey at the age of 36 years, after causing his brother's assassination. He immediately hid himself away from the sight of his subjects and began a hideous reign of crime. We don't know at what age God Almighty ascended the throne of the Universe or who preceded him, but we have little doubt that God owes his throne to the assassin's knife. God, like Abdul, hid away from his loyal subjects and began his unparalleled reign of crime. He has been so exclusive that his full name is not known. It is supposed he murdered his father Godie XII, and took the God XIII.

But let us return to Abdul Hamid. As soon as he was firmly seated on his throne Abdul rolled up his sleeves and plunged his hands into his people's blood. Massacres and executions began and continued during his whole reign. The blood of two hundred thousand victims stains his record. But at last even the ignorant, brutal Turks grew tired of bloodshed and Abdul was quickly dethroned. God's bloody reign still continues. Uncounted millions have perished during his reign. The blood he has shed in this little world alone would fill every lake, river and ocean of the earth. Earthquakes and tidal waves have unmissed him. Fires, plagues and wars have delighted him. He has murdered millions. He has shaken down great cities. He has committed every kind of crime. Every year he grows worse. At present his favorite amusements are earthquakes. How many cities will he destroy before he finds another amusement? His reign will last as long as evil exists. The savage Turks dethroned Abdul Hamid, but God still reigns. Abdul Hamid had murdered 200,000 persons. God has killed his millions. Abdul is a prisoner, hated by all mankind, but God still reigns, and is loved by many.

Mt. Vernon, O.

One That Encourages.

WATER VALLEY, N. Y.—If I have my health will pay you inside of three weeks for a year.—JOEL HICKOX.

BLUE GRASS BLADE

BLUE GRASS BLADE.

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IS CHRISTIANITY CHRISTIAN?

In a recent address before the Peace Conference, at Lake Mohonk, the famous Chinese diplomat, Wu Ting Fang, discussing peace, very abruptly told his hearers, that "whenever the Christian Church became Christian, war would cease."

While the statement may be considered unpalatable for Christian minds, we are of the opinion that the speaker has incorrectly stated the issue. As a matter of fact, the Christian Church has ever been Christian, and nothing else. It was Christian in the days of Constantine, Christian under Clement, Christian through all the dark ages, Christian under the days of the Inquisition, Christian at the time of Luther's revolt, Christian under Henry VIII, Christian in the days of the Puritan fathers, and it is Christian today. War is not contrary to Christian teaching, and it is certainly *en rapport* with Christian practice. But for the sword there would be no Christian Church in existence today. According to the New Testament record of the central figure of the Christian system, he told his hearers that if they had not a sword, to sell their garments and buy one. As a sword is used for no other purpose than war, it is presumed that Jesus intended his followers to fight, if need be, and to kill, if necessary, to propagate faith in himself. When the Christian Church ceases to

foster and encourage war, it will cease to be Christian, and not till.

We are aware that professing Christians have sought to give a so-called spiritual interpretation to the utterance referred to, and would encourage a belief that the sword the hearers of Jesus were told to buy, was a mental sword, for purposes of argument only, and not for physical conflict. But for ages the quotation was used to kindle a warlike spirit in Christian breasts, to influence them against the Infidel, and to prove that armed force was not un-Christian when used in the name of their god.

It is a well-known fact that the most warlike nations on earth are the so-called Christian nations. Immense navies and big standing armies menace the peace of the world. Fancied superiority induces a trial in the art of professional murder. Ministers of the gospel pray over, and bless in the name of their god, every engine of destruction, every implement of war now in use, or in use during ages gone by. They accept pay from the public treasury for these barbarous and bloodthirsty services. When appointments of naval or army chaplains are to be made, sect fights against sect, preacher against preacher, for the sake of preference and the easily earned cash. Instead of declaring against war, these preachers encourage it for the sake of revenue, and this is and has been essentially a Christian practice.

Wu Ting Fang must not assume that Christianity is what it pretends to be. The churches and sects are rent in twain over disputes concerning the supposed founder of their faith. Professions of a mere belief are insufficient. Belief along doctrinal lines is all that the sects demand. Physical violence has ever been their great bulwark. Humanizing influences have seriously leavened the erstwhile Christian spirit. War and worship went hand in hand along the pathway of the Christian march to power. Boodle and boycott, flattery and ostracism, ever the weapons of fools, are made the stock in trade of Christian advocates today.

Wars of defense may sometimes become a political necessity, but Christian nations are renowned for their wars of conquest only. The Christian powers were allied against China but a few years ago, and while apparently non-belligerent during the Russo-Japanese war, all the Christian nations gave a secret sympathy and a silent support to Russia during that conflict, for the only reason that Russia was Christian and Japan a pagan nation.

War has ever been the bridge over which the Christian Church has trod to power. When it ceases to advocate war it will become humanitarian and cease to be Christian. In the "bible" days, god actually took a part in war. At least, so it was believed. To do as their god had done could be no sin to the Christian mind, and swords stained with human blood, have been blessed and sanctified by the pharisaical hypocrites who "talk" of peace, but encourage war. The Christian Church has consistently been a fomenter of strife among men, and this breeds war.

RELIGION PAST AND PRESENT.

Christian apologists claim much for the religious system said to have been founded by the Jewish carpenter, because of its miracles, its supposed fulfillment of prophecy, and its age, or great antiquity. By frequent onslaughts from the Higher Criticism the miraculous has been discredited and its prophetic element completely shattered. Many of its so-called miracles find prototypes in other religions, while its most cherished prophecies have been shown to have no bearing upon Christian issues.

When we consider the age of Christianity proper, it must be admitted that it is a comparatively new religion compared with numerous other systems. The religions of Brahma, in India; of Osiris and Isis, in Egypt; of Ormuzd in Persia; Confucianism in China; to say nothing of the innumerable cults surrounding the Jews, all antedate the Christian religion itself, although claims are made that carry it back to the Genesis period, or to an epoch approximately six thousand years ago. And yet, old as Christianity may be, it is but an eclectic religion, or a religion made up of many older religions, parts and portions being taken from each, so that there is absolutely nothing original about it save in its infamies and iniquities practiced throughout the centuries.

The Christian bases his claims of a divine religion upon the assumption that the Jews were the people specially chosen of God as instruments of special creation and a channel through which he might be able to convey a supposed and fictitious revelation to underneath posterity. Were this claim true, it would necessarily follow that the Jews would have been the most enlightened of all peoples contemporary with them. History reveals the painful fact for Christian advocates, that they were the most savage and ignorant. Side by side with the Jews there flourished a prosperous and powerful people, attaining a degree of civilization unknown to Bible writers, upon whom and for whom the Jehovah of the Bible had never dropped a kind word. Even in that remote period philosophy was not unknown. The statesmen of the age were as far above the average Jewish writer, from whom the Christian scriptures have been derived, as the light of the sun is above that of a tallow candle, and it is sheerest folly to assume that an intelligent deity desiring to transmit an intelligent message to his creatures would have selected the most barbaric people he could find as his medium of communication.

For pure philosophy there is nothing in either the old or new testament that can possibly surpass, or even equal, some of the precepts advanced by Ptah-Hotep, an Egyptian King, who ruled about 3366 before Christ. Among them may be found some of the best thoughts ever committed to writing, and from them we are bound to infer that these people were far older than the Jews in point of antiquity, for we find them well organized, with a strong form of government, an attractive literature, all the outgrowth of

centuries of experience, study and learning. What many antiquarians claim to be the oldest known book in existence is called the *Prisse Papyrus*, now in the Bibliothèque Nationale, in Paris. Translations of the ancient Egyptian monarch's writings have brought the following, which we quote here with approval:

"But be composed, in trouble smile on fate;
Let peace be yours when others agitate,
For they who labor with unruffled calm,
These men succeed, they carry off the palm."

Fully obeyed and honestly lived up to, those four lines contain the sum and substance of human life and living. It is philosophy, sociology, humanity, naturalism, all combined. No known religion contains aught more admirable. It suggests, by inference, that every drone in Humanity's vast hive should be made to feel how small he is, while to the worker is due the greatest reward. Better still, this reward is to be immediate, in the here and now, and is not to be deferred for some other fancied sphere of which no knowledge can be gleaned. And still better, it is pure Freethought. In every generation the writers and thinkers, leaders and speakers, teachers and advocates in the great army of Freethought, have urged similar doctrines as the only possible salvation of the race. It is a materialistic philosophy in which the alleged spiritual is ignored altogether. Gods are slighted, heavens and hells are given no thought, no consideration. Those lines are addressed to man alone; they are intended for man and lay down the whole of man's duty to man.

Considering the bright and cheering philosophy here advanced, the remote antiquity of the age in which it was written, its claims are vastly superior to any Christian claims, and it is head and shoulders in practical wisdom over and above anything the Christian system can advance or suggest.

Between the philosophies of the past and those of the present, myriads of doctrines have been taught, the great bulk of which have been lost in the obliterating waters of Father Time. So it has been that for each new step forward we have taken in intellectual thought, discordant theories have been silenced and the brightest and best left for man to enjoy. His capacity to enjoy depends largely upon temperament. The means to enjoy does not imply that the capacity is there also. Through selected fables given in childhood's plastic age many a mind is warped to such an extent that it is unable to perceive the eternal justice in natural harmony.

According to modern notions, and they may be right, wine improves with age, but the older the Christian religion becomes the more does it appear a ridiculous fallacy, creating foolish divisions among the people of the same nation over mere absurdities, non-essentials.

MENTAL ATTITUDES.

Only timid and frightened creatures need a moral prop upon which to lean for support.

Mental strength and moral worth demands no support, and he who possesses both need not be afraid to stand alone.

The story of a crucified savior is offered as a prop to moral and mental weaklings. Too many are afraid to let go lest they fall. Habit's chains are so strong that they hold us without our being conscious of the fact that we are being held. By and by, we see something which we desire, but just a little beyond the limit of our chains, and how keenly do we realize that we are being held.

Get rid of those chains! In casting them off, do not replace them by others even though they are of a different pattern and newer designs, for remember, they are still chains. Once you have discarded the moral prop, and learned to stand fearlessly alone, you will find that you never did actually need it. If at first you fall, some one will pick you up and give you a start, and, in the course of time, you will learn the art of self-reliance.

Mental cripples, mental weaklings, mental degenerates, all stand in need of a crutch. They underestimate the strength of manhood. They deify personal endeavor. The only remedy is to build your own mental house to suit yourself. Ask permission of no priest or preacher. If you do you will be sure to build on an insecure foundation.

Learn to think and you have learned to live. Thinking is life. Mental death ensues when we depend upon another thinking for us. Every man and woman has courage enough to pass through a day, but we must also learn how to greet the morrow. We cannot win smiles for ourselves if we have only frowns for others. Today may not see every hope fulfilled, but with tomorrow's sun you may see the happier days begin. As George Horace Lorimer once said:

"Remember that when you're right you can afford to keep your temper, and that when you're wrong you can't afford to lose it."

Then as we go through life we will find that it is a difficult feat to get even with one who fails to realize that we are mad at him. We may all owe debts, but the greatest debt we owe Humanity is that of affection. A careful accounting might show many entries against our names on the wrong side of the ledger. Let your guiding star be to, "Smile awhile, and while you smile another smiles, and soon there's miles and miles of smiles, and life's worth while, if you'll only smile."

THE LATE JUDGE C. B. WAITE.

Special memorial services will be held in the Whitney Opera House, Chicago, Ill., Sunday, June 6th, at 3 o'clock in the afternoon, in honor of the late Judge Charles B. Waite, admittedly one of the foremost Freethinkers in America of his time. Judge C. C. Kohlsaat will preside, and the principal address will be delivered by John Emerson Roberts, the noted Liberal lecturer of Kansas City, Mo.

Our friends residing in Chicago and vicinity should make an effort to be present and thus do honor to the memory of the dead scholar.

THE REVIVAL EPIDEMIC.

Poor old Lexington!

When will her people learn that they are periodically victimized out of hundreds of dollars by a gang of wandering tramps who pose as professional soul-savers?

What an easy mark Lexington is getting to be!

Once every year she is worked to a frizzle by men who have no interest in her welfare, save for the cash they can rake in and carry away.

The Brooks Brothers have been brought to this city again under a contract with the Campbellite Church, and after one week's agonizing, preaching a burning hell for the unrepenting sinner, they have succeeded in winning back to the church fifteen backsliding youngsters and made the astounding discovery that the saloons are actually open on Sunday.

From current newspaper reports it appears that these men descended from the high pinnacle assigned to god's ministers, abandoned the saving of souls, and became private detectives. They gained entrance into some saloons by pretending to be that which they were not, practiced deception and fraud, and searing some whiskey in bottles carried them in triumph to the revival platform, where they were used as an illustration and a horrible example.

We make no attempt to defend the saloon-keepers. Whiskey may be a good thing to let alone, but that is not the question here being considered. Lexington was enjoying an epoch of peace and contentment. Her people were satisfied with existing local conditions. No complaints were heard. A peaceful calm, like gossamer upon a summer sea, had settled over the community. But the Brooks Brothers came. If they have a home it is not known. Now the city is in a turmoil and filled with strife. Neighbor is being set against neighbor. Prosecutions are being threatened. The community is divided. Threats are made to ride these fakirs out of the city on a rail. Retaliation is promised. All this in the name of the Christian religion and for the sake of getting ready cash.

From a Christian view-point we may infer that if the Lord did not wish men to drink liquor he would not allow it to be made.

How blessed is the name of religion and how mighty are its ministers!

EDITORIAL POTPOURI.

We are pleased to announce that the splendid little brochure, by President Otto Wettstein, of the Materialist Association, entitled "The Ax to the Root, or a God Impossible in Nature," delivered before the first annual convention at Canal Dover, September last, and published in the Blade, will by the time this issue is in the hands of its readers, be on its way to headquarters, ready for distribution. It should be spread broadcast

all o'er the land, for it is the best effort of its author on this important subject. Write to Otto Wetstein, La Grange, Illinois, or to Eliza Mowry Bliven, Box 76, Brooklyn, Connecticut.

The manuscript of Dr. Hausman's forthcoming book is now a little more than two-thirds in type. The more we advance into its pages the more valuable and interesting it becomes. Its superb criticism of the church in general and Christianity in particular, its pointed and well-poised argument, makes it one of the most valuable contributions to Freethought propagandic literature the world has witnessed in the last twenty-five years. Ninety-eight subscriptions thereto have already been made in advance of its publication, and as we are at a heavy expense in publishing it, we trust our friends and readers who appreciate the effort, will see that it secures a wide distribution. Send your orders in now. We pre-pay postage on all advance subscriptions. After publication it will cost twenty-five cents additional.

Just a word about our subscription list. We are hoping that the current year, at its close, will witness twice as large a subscription to the Blade as at its birth. This can be done if each present subscriber will only secure one new subscriber. Some have sent in clubs of three, five and ten, but the majority make no effort, or at least it does not appear that they do. In order to encourage subscriptions, we will for the balance of the year, reduce the original, or new subscription price, to the sum of one dollar, in any number, from one subscriber, upward. Now do your best, friends, for the Blade is your paper after all. This does not apply to renewals in any case. It is only for new subscribers.

American Freethinkers can indulge in feelings of satisfaction at the latest news from Rome. A band of Freethinkers have organized themselves into a "Giordano Bruno Club," and purchasing property immediately fronting the Vatican, they propose, as a method of propaganda, and as a challenge to the papacy, to display, permanently, a black flag by day and a red light by night. The black flag will symbolize the dark tragedy committed by the priesthood in the year 1600 when Bruno was burned alive at the stake for opinion's sake, and the red light will typify the fiery courage, the zeal and the ambition with which the admirers of Bruno in Rome will defend his name and memory against the clerical traducers.

During the past month we have received an unusually large number of orders for extra copies of the Blade, and we interpret this fact to mean an indication of its constantly growing popularity.

"Prayerful Sykes to Prison for 16 Years." Such is the ominous headline to an article in the Pittsburg (Pa.) Sun, of May 21st. The friend sending us the clipping, also sends a police circular, signed by Jndson Hiner, Chief of Police, at Trenton, New Jersey, asking for the arrest of John Sykes on a charge of embezzlement. Among the statements given in the circular as an aid to identification is the following: "He poses as a religious and moral man; may frequent the Young Men's Christian Association; is a quiet and heavy drinker." The newspaper article telling of his arrest and conviction gives the following: "He was known as the man who could pray the loudest and longest at the revivals held in country churches throughout the county. After the revival, Sykes would take himself to a neighboring town, and securing the best suite of the country hotel, he would spend hours in drinking New Jersey apple-jack brandy." His crime consisted of embezzling many thousands of dollars from his clients and resorting to the forging of eu-

dorsements of worthless paper. He was a lawyer and a prominent church member. Argument is unnecessary.

According to the San Francisco Call, of Monday, May 17th, another preacher has declared against orthodoxy, denouncing it as a foe to progress. It is there reported that Rev. C. C. Pierce, pastor of the Memorial Baptist Church at Los Angeles, startled his congregation by saying: "The old-time foe of all progress has been narrow, ignorant, self-sufficient, bigoted, exclusive, intolerant and ungenerous orthodoxy." His adjectives are inequitable in application and from such a source it comes before the public with greater force than if said by an advocate of Freethought. Who says Freethought is not growing?

We might add to the foregoing paragraph the report that many persons in his congregation rose to their feet when Rev. Pierce delivered his seething denunciation of orthodoxy, undecided whether to make a protest or approve. There can be no doubt that a number of them were shocked, but it is said that another preacher, Rev. Edward H. Brooks, came to his assistance, and by commanding what he had said, quieted the audience and then it was Rev. Pierce poured out more shot upon them and their religion.

Two more preachers led astray, and, of course, the women did it. We all remember the old Adam story and how he laid all the blame upon the shoulders of the woman. "The woman tempted me and I did eat." He has some fitting representatives in this age. Rev. Perry B. Campbell, of Stamping Ground, Ky., about twenty miles from Lexington, abandoned his wife and child, and actually sold his household goods from under them to get enough cash with which to pay the expenses of his elopement with Miss Josephine Hesley, of the same place, a nineteen-year-old girl. The couple were arrested at St. Louis. To the police, as an explanation of his conduct, Campbell said: "The woman tempted me,—I tried to do right, but I could not resist her,—and I fell." Such a moral coward is not worth the price of powder enough to blow him to Hades. The other case comes from Hollywood, California. Rev. Jesse Montague Hunter, Campbellite, eloped with the wife of a wealthy Oregon lumber man, and has been located in Mexico. After reaching a safe retreat with his paramour, he had the inordinate gall to write his wife and tell her to go home to her mother with their babies. A worthy pair of moral sharks to claim divine ambassadorship.

The fool-killer is sadly wanted at Seattle, Washington. It is reported that a rancher named R. C. M'Intosh, believed he was possessed of evil spirits, and instead of urging them to get onto a bunch of porkers, he held both his arms in a hot fire in the expectation of making the spirits vacate their lodgings. It is said he cannot recover and that both arms had to be amputated. The folly and fanaticism of orthodox Christianity amply demonstrated.

R. B. Glenn, formerly Governor of North Carolina, has suffered a complete eclipse by falling from his estate to become an evangelist in the interest of the Presbyterian church. The ex-Governor will find preaching an easier game of graft, but with less honor and manhood than even politicos can bestow.

Earth is able to furnish the heaven sought beyond the clouds if men would but resolve to work for it and win it.

BLUE GRASS BLADE

BUCKEYE SECULAR UNION.

Call to Action by All Members and Friends for a Rousing Convention at Co- lumbus, O., in September Next.

(By Lou Lawrence, Secretary.)

I want to thank the Blade for its mention of the Convention of the Buckeye Secular Union, which will be held in Columbus on the 12th of September.

"Begin to prepare now!"

That is what I would like to know was being done by every Rationalist in the State of Ohio and the friends of the Union in all other States. Concerted effort is what the cause needs. I have been studying church methods to learn how they keep their hold upon the masses, and I find that this is done only by continuous and harmonious labor on the part of a large army of enthusiastic workers. The minister sermonizes those who will come to the regular seasons of worship; leaders from "Men's Meetings," "Women's Meetings," the Epworth League, and the Junior League, go out and persuade people to come to these meetings; while some dear motherly sister who has never been blessed with children of her own gathers the names of the babies on the "Cradle Roll."

Now, Brother Charlesworth, I don't know what you'll think of my endorsing these methods—but I am here to declare that this is all right—if the churches are right. It is the method by which humanity must be bettered morally and socially. Man is a queer animal. You have to go after him when you want to do him a kindness. Just last winter, I saw people who professed to believe that their "eternal salvation" depended upon their being converted and joining the church, sit and wait for some one to come and persuade them to give their names to the church. Yes! and I have seen them refuse the tearful entreaties of their friends who begged them to take the decisive step. We Rationalists are ever ready to condemn such conduct as injudicious on the part of these people; and from the religious standpoint it is very much so; and I hope all those who think the spread of Freethought to be desirable will get up and boldly "march down to the altar" before the 12th of September, and consecrate themselves and their available powers to the sacred cause of Mental Liberty.

Brothers and sisters, don't wait for the officers to address you personally and urge you to attend and to contribute toward the expenses; but write us—a postal card if no more—telling us that you will be on hand, or wishing the work "Godspeed" at the least. The Secretary has written to a number, and expects to write to many

more; but there are hundreds whose addresses are not available. Besides, your taking the initiative and writing first will halve the combined expense. For years the Secretary has borne the expense of her correspondence, but this year that stalwart worker for Humanity, C. R. Woodward, sent a generous contribution, which is being partly applied in this manner.

Some who have been addressed have failed to respond. This is a little discouraging. We would like to enroll those who are likely to attend. Such list will be valuable in many ways. And, too, it might be a good thing for the friends of the Union to do what the Methodists call "personal work";—get out among your friends, either personally or by letter, and try to induce them to lend a helping hand—just any hand they can spare.

See, B. S. U., 368 Chestnut St., Barnesville, Ohio.

THE ATTITUDE OF FREETHOUGHT.

(By J. C. Watkins.)

It is the aim and object of Freethinkers as the writers understands it, to secure and maintain the right of individuals to think for themselves, to express their views, and to teach and practice the truth as they believe and understand it.

It is not the object of Freethinkers, nor will it be a result of this liberty of thought and expression, to injure the cause of morality or to interfere with the spread of truth and justice; but on the contrary, these are the very things that it is the aim of Freethought to promote and foster. Holding that superstitious beliefs are not essential to right doing, they are naturally antagonistic to theories, beliefs, creeds and theological dogmas which are not supported by rational evidences; and which theories, creeds, etc., they believe to be erroneous. Their arguments and contentions are such as appeal to reason rather than sentiment, and the evidences which they offer in support of their position are scientific and tangible and not supernatural and mythical. Freethinkers are not trying to convince themselves that there is no god, no heaven, no hell, no future existence, etc., that they may feel free to do wrong and ignore the voice of conscience, but they are simply investigators of the truth or falsity of the ideas and doctrines referred to. After such investigation the majority of them are convinced that many of these beliefs are erroneous, and some of them harmful to entertain and put into practice.

It is scarcely to be expected that orthodox Christians and Freethinkers can harmonize in belief, but they should at least treat each other with respect and try to think one another honest and sincere, and

all unite in doing good humanitarian deeds and in seeking the truth.

Kanawha Falls, W. Va.

REPLY TO J. E. BURKHART.

(By F. B. Hall.)

In your Feb. 28th issue (you make it the 21st) J. E. Burkhardt has a fine article on "Thought." I wish to ask him if this same article had been labeled "The Mysterious Complex Flexible Human Hand," would it not have been as much in order? For it is very certain that all the activities of the world today, and ever, are due to this human member—emanations from it as "thoughts" are emanations of a complex brain. He says, "Who built the chariots, harnessed the steeds, and made them capable of untiring travel? Who holds, guides and controls them along the highways on land, in air and on the sea?" Mr. Burkhardt says "thought" emanating from brain, did it. I contend that emanations from our "supple hands" is the direct cause.

Does any one contend that we could have had watches, paintings, works of art of all kinds, all industries of our present civilization, if our hands had never developed further than a rabbit's foot? If our hand was a rabbit's foot in detail, where would be our exalted "thoughts" today? I have known fools—Blind Tom and other imbeciles—who played fine music on the piano, which they could never have done if their hands were as undeveloped as their thoughts.

There appears to be today, two sides to all questions—OUR side and the OTHER side—and Materialist want to know something of that "other side." The human hand and brain have evolved side by side in like manner, and one is no more a factor than the other in our present civilization.

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June 13—"The Song of the Heavenly Host," and similar demonstrations of celestial delight at the birth of "Buddha," "Krishna," "Confucius," "Osiris," "Apollonius," "Apollo," "Hercules," "Aesculapius," etc. Chapter 14.

June 20—"The Divine Child Recognized and Presented with Gifts." Krishna, Buddha, Christ Jesus, Confucius, Mithras, Socrates, Aesculapius, all were found by

wise men who presented them with birthday gifts. Chapter 15.

June 27—"The Birth-Place of Christ Jesus," and its universal myth, as with Krishna, Buddha, Hon-Tseih, Abraham, Adonis, Apollo, Mithras, Hermes, Attys., etc., all born while their mother was on a journey. Chapter 16.

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The Blade's Correspondence

President Roberts at Work.

DENNISON, O.—I am starting to get Club to renew, and also new subscribers. I asked the Blade in my letter with the donation to furnish names of subscribers I sent in last year as I have no roster of same. As yet no response. So far have five renewals and one new subscriber. I find it slow work; times are hard, so they say! I am going to Columbus in a few days to look for a hall and hotel accommodations for September meeting. Will write you of my success. I want to go to New Rochelle if I can, as I don't expect to be on "terra firma" 100 years hence; so if I don't go this time I'll be shut out next. If the people of Ohio who are Free-thinkers will evince ordinary interest in our efforts to enroll members in the Buckeye Secular Union, we would be more encouraged to work harder in the cause of Truth and Liberty.—G. O. ROBERTS.

Sends His Renewal.

CHICAGO, ILL.—I am enclosing you the \$1.50 to be used in marking up my tag for another year. Recently, in conversation with a very good Christian lady, I asked her what was "the aim and purpose, the object and intention of the religionists?" She said she did not know. I then asked her what were the "foundation principles of religion?" She said she did not know. I then asked her if it was not a fact that the foundation principle of religion was the "salvation of the Soul?" And she said that it was. I then asked her if she could prove that she had a soul? And she said that she could not. Then I asked why it was that so much ado was being made to save the soul when no one was able to prove that there was such a thing as the soul? She failed to reply. She was a graduate of a Baptist Hospital and fairly educated.—E. F. CREEVY.

From "Kiver to Kiver."

ELLISVILLE, MISS.—By the grace of friend Lockhart, of Eastabachie, Miss., I have several copies of the Blade of different dates. But date or no date, I read them all from cover to cover. I am an ex-Methodist preacher, not made such by the "spirit of God", but by heredity and environment. I reckon I had Methodism as bad as anybody until I began to doubt. You know the Bible says "The fear of the Lord is the beginning of wisdom." But at the age of 64 I find that "the FEAR of

the Lord" is the chief BAR to wisdom or knowledge. It's like a cable fastened to the mind or soul, and tied to some church, lest it should ramble off in search of knowledge. I suppose I was born a Radical; hence, have long been in the minority. I am old, poor and crippled, an ex-Confederate soldier; went into the army before I was 18; my mother put in my pocket a New Testament to study prayerfully while I was out killing Yankees and defending human slavery. You know James says: "Servants, be obedient to your masters;" and we didn't think Yankees had any right to "put asunder what God had joined together," and in this faith I "fit, bled and died for my country," and haven't got any country yet, and paying rent to live on the earth. But notwithstanding the "divine institution of chattel slavery" it went down all the same, and even God wasn't able to maintain it against the giant of Intelligent Reason; and the same power that destroyed chattel slavery in the nineteenth century will in the twentieth century eternally overthrow political, industrial and religious slavery, and all this must be done ere mankind is FREE—and as everything is cause and effect, Freethought being the cause, it MUST effect the complete elimination of all forms of slavery. There can't be any middle ground or stopping place. The puny efforts of church and legislation to stop or regulate the march of human thought, or to confine it to priestly and conservative would be just as effective turned upon the Seasons or the course of the planets. I am almost in distress of mind because I can't send you the price of the Blade. There are a number of my friends in the churches who enjoy reading the Blade. It's an eye-opener, and they do need it. Shall try to get you a club of five anyhow. I am in the fight for freedom, and to stay. God or no God. Hurrah for the Blade (two-edged!)—T. B. WALDEN.

Would Like Some Lectures.

SHAWNEE, OKLA.—I am enclosing check for \$3, \$1.50 to pay my subscription to the Blade to Jan. 1910, and \$1.50 for Walter Hunt's novel, "The Scarlet Shadow." Ask Charlesworth if he would like to visit Oklahoma. I believe that I could arrange for a lecture if he would come. With best wishes to you and yours, I am yours very truly.—J. M. BYLER.

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The superstitions world some language new.

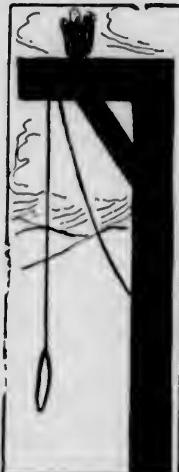
No style on earth like his in letter writing,
No parables for Charles with business went;

A man heroic in our Freethought fighting,
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